



ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF REAL PROPERTY TAX SERVICES

NEWS RELEASE

January 29, 2020

CONTACT: Scott Bylewski / scott.bylewski@erie.gov
Phone: (716)858-8333

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF REAL PROPERTY TAX SERVICES, PARTNERS ARRIVE AT TAX BILL SOLUTION

Municipalities will be held harmless; refunds for any overpayments will be sent in March and July

Solution eliminates need for overtime work

ERIE COUNTY, NY – The Erie County Department of Real Property Tax Services, working closely with the Erie County Clerks Association and after close consultation with local clerks, supervisors and assessors, will immediately begin implementing a correction to an issue that became apparent with county tax bills last Friday. The bills, which were distributed in larger towns countywide, contained an error in the amount of college chargebacks for which each municipality is responsible. College chargebacks are costs incurred by municipalities when Erie County residents attend community colleges in other counties; the erroneous tax bills' chargeback figure does not reflect measures approved in the 2020 Adopted Erie County Budget that resulted in a significantly lower chargeback cost for municipalities.

“This issue was discovered just last Friday by our Office of Budget and Management, and after meetings and conference calls with officials at the local level we were able to work out a solution that holds municipalities harmless, does not increase their workload and actually eliminates their need for extra staff or overtime. It also gets these refunds into taxpayers’ hands with a minimum of inconvenience,” **said Scott Bylewski, Director of Real Property Tax Services.**

All Erie County taxpayers should continue to pay the full amount listed on the tax bills they receive by the due date stated on their bill.

Towns of the First Class (with populations of 10,000 or over) and cities will continue to collect taxes based on the original 2020 tax bills already sent to those municipalities. Erie County will NOT be sending out revised tax bills to these towns and cities. Instead, Erie County will mail out a revised tax statement (not a bill) along with a refund check for property owners who are due a refund. On average, taxpayers who were overcharged can expect a refund of \$0.0679 cents per thousand dollars of assessed value.

These refund checks will be sent on two dates:

- First, refund checks will be sent after on-time tax payments have been received, in early March.
- The second mailing will occur after the towns and cities complete tax collection on June 30th. These refunds will be sent in July.

The solution also allows municipalities to continue collecting taxes without disturbing their respective, ongoing collection processes while respecting taxpayers’ rights to a timely refund. Towns of the Second Class (those with populations of 10,000 or fewer) will receive corrected 2020 tax bills beginning on Monday, February 3 and will not be affected by the error. Erie County Real Property Tax Services will continue working closely with all towns to ensure proper data collection throughout the process.

Director of the Division of Budget and Management Robert Keating added, “We have also received assurance from the New York State Comptroller’s Office that Erie County remains in compliance with the tax cap. I thank the many offices who came together over the past few days to put our heads together and craft this solution, which is workable for all and good for taxpayers.”